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EXAMINER

GAY, SONIA L

ART UNIT

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

This action is in response to Amendment submitted on 07/16/2008 in which claims 1 -16 are presented for examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. Claims 1-4 and 13- 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over Kawamoto (US 2001/0023487) in view of Wesley et al. (US 6,275,859).

For claims 1 and 13, Kawamoto teaches a host management method and apparatus (authentication server terminal: Fig. 1, 100) being placed on a network to which hosts of an electronic conference system (sender terminal, receiver terminal: Fig. 1, 110, 140) are connected comprising:

a host authentication section (user authentication device : Fig. 2 222) for authenticating a selected host ([0044]) and,

a host information registration section (user information retrieving section: : Fig. 2 231) for registering host information including IP address information (multicast address and port number, [0039]) of a host authenticated by said host authentication section. ([0039])

Yet, Kawamoto fails to teach a host authentication section for authenticating a selected host based on a user key that is unique to users of the host management apparatus.

However, Wesley et al, discloses a host management apparatus and method wherein a user presents a user key that is unique to users of the host management apparatus to the hose

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management apparatus for the purpose of authenticating a selected host to participate in an electronic conference (column 3 lines 65 - column 4 lines 11).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify Kawamoto with the teachings of Wesley et al. for the user to present a user key that is unique to the users of the host management apparatus, i.e. password, for the purpose of authenticating a selected host to participate in an electronic conference.

For claims 2 – 4 and 13 – 15, Kawamoto further discloses

host information storage section (server registration information: Fig. 2 240) for storing the host information of the host authenticated by said host authentication section. ([0039])

a host information update section for updating the host information stored in the host information storage section. ([0039])

wherein the host information update section updates the host information in a predetermined cycle. (login, logout, periodically retransmitting encryption key as record of participation : [0018][0045])

storing the host information of the host authenticated in said step of authenticating the selected host ([0039]); updating the stored host information ([0018][0045]); and acquiring host information of a host that enables to be connected for taking part in a conference([0039]) .

a host management program of a host management apparatus being placed on a network to which hosts of an electronic conference system are connected, causing a computer to perform: a host authentication function of authenticating a selected host; and a host information

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registration function of registering host information including IP address information of a host authenticated by the host authentication function. (Claim 9; [0039][0044]).

2. Claims 5-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawamoto (US 2001/0023487) in view of in view of Wesley et al. (US 6,275,859), and further in view of Yamaguchi et al. (US. 7,136,997)

For claims 5-8, Kawamoto fails to teach a host information exchange section for mutually exchanging the host information between said host management apparatus and another host management apparatus.

However, Yamaguchi et al. teaches a device and method wherein said host management apparatus (authentication server for carrying out a registration of a new device : column 3 lines 21 – 24) contains an information exchange section (registration information delivery unit : column 4 lines 14 – 17) for the purpose of mutually exchanging host information between said host management apparatus and another host apparatus (back-up authentication server : column 3 lines 24 – 29) to avoid the problem of losing host information if only one host apparatus is available and fails (column 2 lines 43 - 46).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention disclosed in Kawamoto with the invention disclosed in Yamaguchi et al. to include an information exchange section in the host management apparatus disclosed above in Kawamoto for the purpose of exchanging registration information of the hosts disclosed above in Kawamoto with another host management apparatus disclosed above in Kawamoto.

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For claims 9 - 12, Yamaguchi further discloses the claimed invention above and further discloses wherein the host information exchange section exchanges the host information in a predetermined cycle (Yamaguchi, time of device registration : column 10 lines 43 – 57).

3. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawamoto (US 2001/0023487) in view of Wesley et al. (US 6,275,859), and further in view of Kleinman et al. (US 6,629,243).

For claim 16, Kawamoto fails to teach a plurality of host management apparatuses according to Claim 1; wherein the plurality of host management apparatuses are distant from one another; and wherein the plurality of host management apparatuses mutually exchange information therebetween.

However, Kleinman et al. discloses a plurality of host management apparatuses according to Claim 1 wherein the plurality of host management apparatuses are distant from one another and mutually exchange information therebetween for the purpose conducting a secure multicast (column1 lines : 11 – 16; column 6 lines 51 – 60).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the teachings of Kawamoto et al. with the teachings of Kleinman et al. wherein a plurality of the host management apparatuses which are distant from one another mutually exchange information therebetween for the purpose of conducting a secure multicast.

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Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1 - 15 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to SONIA GAY whose telephone number is (571)270-1951. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM EST.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ahmad Matar can be reached on (571) 272-7488. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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/Sonia Gay/
Examiner, Art Unit 2614

October 20, 2008

/Ahmad F Matar/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2614